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Swedish Hero Still Alive in the Soviet?

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STOCKHOLM, Jan. 15 — An international panel called on the Soviet Union today to reopen the case of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat presumed to have disappeared in Soviet prisons after saving thousands of Jews from the Nazis in the final days of World War II.

After a hearing in which the panel was told that Mr. Wallenberg had been seen alive in the Soviet Union after the Soviet authorities reported him dead, the group concluded that the original Soviet statement could not have been true and that "tragic misinformation" had been advanced about the diplomat's fate.

"We have every reason to believe that he is still alive," said a resolution adopted by the panel, which was headed by Ingrid Garde Wideman, a Justice of the Swedish Supreme Court and chairman of the Swedish Raoul Wallenberg Association, which sponsored the meeting.

The Soviet Embassy here described the hearing as an anti-Soviet provocation.

Bluff and Heroism

A member of a prominent family of bankers and industrialists, Mr. Wallenberg would be 69 years old today. The Swedish Government sent him to Budapest in mid-1944 at the request of the United States War Refugee Board and the World Jewish Congress to "try to save" Hungarian Jews from deportation to Nazi extermination camps. With what was described as bluff, heroism and contempt for convention, Mr. Wallenberg managed to issue protective passes to about 20,000 Jews and to assist indirectly, perhaps 100,000 more.

When Soviet troops entered Budapest in January 1945, Mr. Wallenberg and his driver were placed under what was described to the Swedish Foreign Ministry a month later as Soviet protection. It was assumed that the Soviet Union regarded him as a possible spy for the United States.

But in 1947, Andrei V. Vyshinsky, the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister at the time, told the Swedish Government that the diplomat was not in the Soviet Union and was unknown to the Soviet authorities.

'I Met Raoul Wallenberg'

However, the Russians changed their story in 1957, when reports from returning prisoners of war mentioned Mr. Wallenberg. Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko reported that a search of prison archives showed that Mr. Wallenberg had died of a heart attack in his cell in



Raoul Wallenberg

with Mr. Wallenberg in 1951, 1953 and 1956.

The name of the informant was not disclosed at his request, Mr. Wiesenthal said, but according to one account, the general, who had been released from prison, died in 1979 after being hounded by the Soviet secret police for discussing his acquaintance with the Swede.

An American, Marvin W. Mankinen, a professor of biophysics at the University of Chicago, who was arrested by the Soviet authorities in 1961 and served 28 months in prison on espionage charges, told the panel a cell mate spoke to him of the presence of a Swede at a time when officials in Stockholm knew of no other possible Swedish prisoners in the Soviet Union except Mr. Wallenberg.

"We've had no satisfactory evidence from the Soviets about his fate, and considerable material indicating that Raoul Wallenberg did not die as we've been told," said a member of the panel, Gideon Hausner, the chief Israeli prosecutor in the trial of Adolf Eichmann. "Therefore, we cling to the idea that he is alive."

July 1947 at the age of 35.

The most unusual testimony presented to the panel today was a report from Andrei Shimkevich, who said that he served 27 years for espionage in Soviet jails from 1930 to 1957.

"I met Raoul Wallenberg in December 1947," Mr. Shimkevich said. "Nothing is forgotten in prison."

He said that they shared the same cell for two days, five months after the diplomat's reported death. Mr. Wallenberg, the witness said, told him that he was a diplomat under investigation for spying. Mr. Shimkevich declined to reply to reporters' questions about whether he had told of the meeting before, and, if not, why he had withheld the information.

General Is Reportedly Hounded

Other testimony came from Simon Wiesenthal, who runs the Jewish Documentation Center in Vienna. He said that Gennadi N. Kupriyanov, a Soviet general sentenced to prison for participation in an alleged plot, told a reliable informant now in the West that he had spent time

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